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ABSTRACT

Employment patterns for educational administrators in southeastern Kentucky are shaped by the impending retirements of a large proportion of educational personnel; the changing nature of the principalship; shallow candidate pools for elementary and secondary principalships; and increased collaboration between elementary-secondary schools and higher education. These factors provided the impetus for creating the Aspiring Principal Program. This paper describes how the program was developed and implemented among three universities--the University of Kentucky, Eastern Kentucky University, and Morehead State University. The paper describes the program's procedural and philosophical agreements, curricular objectives, and course content. Students participated in the following activities: the Leadership Early Assessment Program, a student-selected event, a staff-development workshop, a simulated job interview, principal shadowing, the Kentucky Technology Conference, community visitation, a state-legislature visitation, and a portfolio-development workshop. The program's experiences are being used to plan a restructured model for the development of school leaders in Kentucky. (Contains 16 references.) (LMI)

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Running head: Aspiring Principals

A Model of Statewide Collaboration in Administrator Preparation

The Aspiring Principal's Program in Southeast Kentucky

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A Model of Statewide Collaboration in Administrator Preparation

The Aspiring Principal's Program in Southeast Kentucky

Background

The context of the South Eastern Kentucky Aspiring Principal's Program is notable for four reasons. First, like most of the U.S. and many industries besides education, Kentucky suffers from the impending retirements of a large proportion of educational personnel due to aging "baby-boomer" employees. Second, and unique to Kentucky, the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) significantly changed the nature of the principalship as it mandated profound reforms in finance, curriculum, and governance. Thirdly, the political culture and rural nature of several remote eastern Kentucky regions led to shallow candidate pools for both elementary and secondary principalships. Finally, good working relationships among educational administration faculty at three public universities and emerging state pressure for collaboration between elementary-secondary schools and higher education resulted in the Aspiring Principal Program, the product of three institutions of higher education, two state agencies and a consortium of 11 school districts. Each of these four factors served as an impetus to the implementation of an Aspiring Principals Program.

The market impact of "boomers" is legendary. Kentucky's economy and workforce is typical in its projection of "boomer" influence. In the late 1980's, state and professional organizations predicted a 90% turnover in school leadership by the end of the 1990's. The projection of teacher retirements has compounded the problem at almost the same rate as school administrators. Thus, the usual pool for new school principals would dry up nearly as

quickly as principals became eligible for retirement. Typically, scholars of supply and demand would expect shortages in areas where pay scales were lower and the standard of living less desirable such as the deep inner city and extremely rural and poor counties (Griffiths, Stout & Forsyth, 1988).

These extremely rural and poor counties generated the second factor impacting principal candidacy, the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). A deep, growing statewide dissatisfaction with elementary and secondary education led to the formation of the Council for Better Education composed of 66 poor counties. In 1985, the Council sued the state claiming inequity in educational funding. The Kentucky Supreme Court rendered a final decision in 1989 that declared the entire system of public schools unconstitutional and gave the Kentucky Legislature six months to a year to rectify the situation. By April of 1990, the state legislature signed KERA into law and fundamentally changed the work of all Kentucky educators (Alexander, 1990; Combs, 1991; Dove, 1991; Lindle, 1995; Legislative Research Commissions, 1990; Rose v. Council for Better Education, Inc. et al, 1989; Steffy, 1993).

The radical reforms in finance, curriculum and governance also generated critical changes in the roles and tasks of the principalship. Principals were now asked to be instructional leaders in the improvement of school performance as school buildings became the site for accountability in students' achievement. Principals were expected to chair newly formed School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils composed of teachers and parent representatives, an administrative role for which most were not prepared. The development of the Primary Program, plunged elementary principals into an ungraded multi-age structure

for the first four years of elementary school, formerly kindergarten through third grades. The pressure on all educators was phenomenal because by the fall of 1991, every educator's job description changed. Experienced principals felt as if they were having their first year all over again (Lindle, 1992, 1995a, 1995b; Simpson, 1991).

Despite amazing judicial and legislative unity in the enactment of KERA, Kentucky's political culture is highly fragmented. The Democratic Party has held a vice-like grip on most statewide offices since reconstruction; yet the eastern part of the state consistently votes Republican for local and national offices. The western half is solidly Democratic, though as in most of the South, this block may be eroding. Notwithstanding these party line differences, the entire state is noted for its conservative values. Moving away from home for work is somewhat tolerated if the move is from a rural county to the more urban central part of the state. Moving out of state for a job is counter to family and community traditions. As a result, Kentucky has one of the U.S.'s most stable and least transient populations. Perhaps the most cited examples of this determined allegiance to home and family is found in eastern Kentucky, the heart of Appalachia. (Caudill,1963; Miller, 1994) In this area, the boom-bust cycles of coal mining and farming leave many families in poverty and have established a well-known intergenerational welfare subsistence problem.(Caudill, Garrett,1996; Miller, 1994) Given the instability of local industry, perhaps the only stable enterprise in many eastern counties is the public school system. As a result, school board members are plagued with pleas for employment and in the worst cases succumb to a pattern of patronage and nepotism (Caudill,1963; Dove, 1991). Part of KERA specifically outlawed nepotism, but throughout the states whispers of cronyism remain (Legislative Research

Commission, 1990). As a result, some openings for principal remain uncontested due to actual fact or incipient rumors of an inequitable selection process (Caudill, 1963; Legislative Research Commission, 1990; Miller, 1994).

A shortage of viable principal candidates resulted from these three factors. Natural attrition of "boomer" principals as well as "boomer" faculty who chose to retire rather than move into the principalship created a partial drain on the principal candidate pool. The many ways in which KERA changed the work of principals also impacted people's readiness and desire to become principals. Thirdly, the political culture and reputation of many regions of the state had a negative impact on people's willingness to apply for principalships. Such forces managed to galvanize several institutions and agencies into action.

In the spring of 1995, Elwood Cornett, the Executive Director of the Kentucky Valley Educational Consortium (KVEC), contacted the University of Kentucky's Department of Administration & Supervision. Cornett spoke for the superintendents of KVEC's 11 member school districts. These superintendents reported stringent efforts in recruiting new principals with only meager results. Under KERA, SBDM Councils select their new principals, but superintendents must provide a "list" of eligible candidates (KRS § 160.345). Superintendents related finding few and, in some cases, no eligible candidates for the position. Furthermore, these 11 superintendents also were appalled to discover that many of their teachers had not been seeking administrative certification once they had received their initial post-masters pay raise under Kentucky's ranking system. Cornett related that the superintendents had decided that they needed to "grow their own" in answering their principal shortage.

Although the University of Kentucky (UK)is the only land grant institution in Kentucky as well as the only university in the state with a state-wide mission, its service area has been limited by Kentucky's Council on Higher Education (CHE). CHE governs Kentucky's eight public universities through policy making and budgeting formulas financed by the Legislature. CHE has carved the state into eight service areas roughly corresponding to each campus's immediate region. KVEC's 11 school districts straddled the service areas of two state universities, Eastern Kentucky University(EKU) and Morehead State University (MSU). Note that UK was not one of the service institutions. Therefore Cornett was directed to contact the deans of education at Morehead and Eastern Kentucky Universities.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Division of Professional Development had just completed a study of recruitment and training needs of the principalship. This task was precipitated by the knowledge of the dearth of principal candidates and the Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Boards (EPSB)'s adoption of New Administrator Standards for certification (EPSB, 1994). (The EPSB is a creature of KERA.)

Part of the task force for the Division included professors from EKU, Morehead, and UK as well as other institutions in Kentucky. The university professors were familiar with one another through other state activities as well as through periodic meetings of the Kentucky Council of Professors of Educational Administration (KCPEA). These professors had shown an understanding of principal recruitment and training problems.

The PD division's study of principals' training needs and knowledge of collegial relationship of the educational administration professors in the three participating universities

provided a "climate of receptiveness" for Cornett's project. This was an opportune time to join these needs and people in restructuring a model preparation program aligned with the New Administration Standards for Certification. When Elwood Cornett submitted a grant the KDE agreed to fund a scholarship fund for 22 students . The grant provided tuition, assessment and administrative costs.

Through spring and summer 1995, professors from the three universities and representatives from the two state agencies and KVEC met to develop a one year certification plan which came to be known as the Aspiring Principals Program. Some of the challenges tackled in these meetings were, how to overcome the minutia of admissions and transcripts among three universities, and how to structure the curriculum to implement the New Administrator Standards passed by the Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Board.

The university that had a professor teaching a class received the tuition for the entire class. The minutia associated with university record keeping proved to be somewhat more difficult. Students had to apply to and be accepted by the Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) graduate school. These EKU students enrolled as visiting students when their professor of record was not an EKU professor.

Faculty worked together to accommodate students' work schedules. The faculty also spent many hours planning the curriculum for the Aspiring Principals Program.

Procedural and Philosophical Bases

Establishing the Aspiring Principal Program as a collaborative venture was dependent on several agreements and assumptions needed to operationalize the ideas that emerged from the response to the needs expressed by the superintendents in KVEC. Once the collaborative

idea was accepted by all parties, the following agreements were forged to assure legal compliance with the State's function to certify educational personnel and to guarantee that students completing the program would have viable employment outlets:

1. State certification would be based on program approval by EKU wherein students upon completion of the program and state testing requirements would receive a recommendation for certification.
2. The three collaborating institutions of higher education would provide appropriate academic content and evaluation to assure compliance with state certification requirements. Each institution would participate by providing faculty time, expertise, and resources to the program's development and operation.
3. The superintendents would include graduates from the program on lists of available candidates to be considered by school-based councils.

So that the collaborative program could achieve the potential for influencing state-wide preparation of school administrators, the following assumptions were made to guide the development and operation of the program:

1. The collaborative involvement of multiple agencies was central to developing a shared vision for preparing educational leaders. Each institution of higher education, the consortium of school districts, and the State Division of Professional Development collaborated to accomplish this common mission. Collaborative involvement assured a consensus of philosophy and practice in such program features as field-based learning experiences, simulated episodes, reflection on leadership roles and cognitive schemata of

educational leaders, and problem based learning activities. Such a consensus would lead to more uniform results in such restructuring efforts as shared models of leadership, teaming, new roles for teachers and students, and grass roots or bottom-up change strategies.

2. A sense of a community of educational administrators was forged that transcended the usual parameters evolving from regional domains assigned to individual institutes of higher education. Community was fostered in this program in multiple layers. The first was a community of university faculties that worked through individual differences in beliefs, attitudes, and traditions regarding the nature of principal preparation programs. The result was to minimize the differences between institutions and unify programmatic features so that one program was the product of three institutions. The resulting program was enriched by diverse experiences and views. The second layer is a community of school leaders covering a wide geographical area within the state forged by the interactions and professional growth within the cadre of students. The third layer was the community of school systems that would be bonded by like-minded school leaders who have been trained in a coherent program designed to provide principals with the capabilities to guide their schools within the context of the new demands of educational reform in Kentucky. This sense of community grew through what Fullan (1993) describes as reculturing—a reculturing that leads to a community of caring, a community characterized by relationships not structures, mutual respect and trustworthiness, open communication, substantive dialogue, collegial participation, building on strengths rather than deficiencies, and the celebration of successes.

3. The collaborative involvement of multiple agencies provided training enhanced in quality and capability to provide a preparation program appropriate to the needs of the school districts. This collaboration effort would be richer in intellectual content, philosophical perspective and stimulating activities than a single institution could provide. The combined effort would be able to provide a more uniform and equitable principal preparation program throughout the KVEC. The resources of three universities were shared and the expertise of three faculties were pooled. Students who became eligible for the principal candidate pool were prepared by one program of uniform higher quality than three separate programs not receiving the collaborative benefits.

The above assumptions—shared vision, sense of community, and enhanced capability—are the supporting philosophical structures upon which the program delivery rested. Such notions gave the collaborative venture its strength and differentiated it from the current principal preparation programs that are striving to keep up with the demands of educational reform in Kentucky.

The Curriculum

The planning of the course of study began in the spring of 1995. Elwood Cornett, the director of the Kentucky Valley Educational Consortium; Ed Van Meter, chair of the UK Department of Educational Administration and Leonard Burns, chair of the EKU Department of Educational Administration worked on the overall design. Eastern Kentucky's Leonard Burns, Morehead State University's Marium Williams, the University of Kentucky's James Rinehart and Patricia Johnson were the project planning team that worked on the details of the curriculum.

The Kentucky Valley Educational Consortium (KVEC) and the Kentucky Department of Education had given the charge to immediately provide this cohort the necessary coursework to qualify them for level one certification in the principalship. This is the first step for the Educational Specialist Degree or the Rank One (a level of pay above the Master's degree in Kentucky). Level one certification was to be completed within the frame of August of 1995 and July of 1996. These designers and providers of the curriculum wanted the experience to be stimulating and rewarding but not so overwhelming as to drive away potential leaders.

The discussion immediately focused on how to get this cohort through the work necessary to earn 19 hours of credit. The committee had been given much encouragement by the state department to revise and invent a core of experiences that would be most beneficial in readying these students for the realities of the principalship in Kentucky's educational reform environment.

The paper screening process chaired by Dr. Burns included Mark Cleveland (KDE) Wayne Young (Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA), Randal Smith (KVEC) , Pat Riestenberg (KVEC) and superintendents and /or their designees Fred Stidham, Bill Caudill and Helen Cooper. The interview committee included Dr,.. Burns , P. Riestenberg, R. Smith , B. Caudill and H. Cooper. These veteran administrators and educators assured us this was a strong group of students with many experiences in the classroom and as school leaders. Many of them held leadership responsibilities in their schools for reform efforts. They held a variety of roles; they were members of Site-Based-Decision-Making Councils, portfolio facilitators and assessors of the state mandated math and writing assessments, school technology coordinators, school-based staff development

coordinators, department heads, committee chairs and cluster leaders. These students and their experiences would enrich the curriculum for everyone. This pool of talent and the collegiality that would develop within the cohort would encourage a networking of resources throughout their leadership careers.

With this insight into the experiences of the group, these planners decided to emphasize the realities of practitioners' work. Field experiences were to be integrated throughout the year. The traditional field experiences were to include a broad range of special events and activities that would become a rich, extended curriculum. Students were asked to shadow principals, interview community members, and experience the work of classified staff. Assignments were made early in the first semester. During the second semester or earlier, the students were asked to choose mentor principals. Under their professors' and mentors' supervision, students were involved in activities to help them gain competencies indicated under the Kentucky New Administrator Standards. These activities were shared both formally and informally with the professors in that term's classes. The documentation that accompanied many of these projects was to be monitored by the practicum instructor, Dr. Williams.

Another objective of this planning committee was that the students be made aware of the importance of their competency with technology. Some would turn on computers and word process their first memos in this program. All the professors encouraged this skill, but Dr. Burns taught students the specific rigors of e-mail, spreadsheets, resumes, letters and presentations. Through out the year Burns insisted that students build a vision of technology for schools. All were enriched by the advanced technology skills of some of the students in

the project.

To link students more closely to current practice, readings in recent research and theory, action research, school climate assessments, curriculum assessments, program assessments, teacher observations, school improvement simulations and case studies were activities that they experienced in this project. Class discussions and writings frequently asked these students to reflect on these activities. Students were encouraged to connect learnings to past experiences and their visions of what schools and classrooms of the future could be.

The assessments used in this program focused on the immediate needs of the work of the principal. School councils are mandated in Kentucky. Except for a few exemptions, these new principals will be thrust into situations where shared governance requires them to facilitate group decision making. Therefore, assessments were often group performance tasks. The class would be divided into work groups and asked to discuss and solve a school problem. Then, either individually or in a group, they were to describe their solutions; give a rationale for choosing that strategy; and, if possible, relate this position to readings, research or experiences that support this choice.

Another assessment was a continuous self-evaluation activity for the students—their working portfolio. This process assessed the students' understanding of the components of the state standards and their own applicable competencies. As the year progressed, they were to document by writings, letters and products their competencies. They were to find a suitable fit between these competencies and the 43 indicators (see appendix) listed under the three standards. Those indicators that they or their professors and mentors felt were not yet mastered would become part of their professional development plans that were also a

requirement of their portfolios.

Curriculum Objectives

The students will complete their first level of principal certification within 12 months.

The students will participate with a cohort of aspiring principals providing a network of support for immediate and long range professional development.

The students will have a reality-based view of the principal's work—to ensure this objective, an extended curriculum will be provided.

The students will have a knowledge base and experiences that will enable them to meet the competencies indicated under the three administrator standards of Instructional Leadership, Communication, and Organizational Management.

The students will prepare working portfolios, then professional portfolios to document their competencies.

The students will demonstrate competency in technology necessary to model a technology leadership role.

The students will experience a variety of authentic assessments such as portfolios, performance tasks, exhibits and simulations.

Schedule Semester One

Introduction to Educational Administration—Dr. James Rinehart, U.K.

Program Evaluation and Assessment---Dr. Leonard Burns, EKU

Micro Computer Applications of Educational Leadership---Dr. Leonard Burns, EKU

(Both courses by Dr. Burns were integrated throughout the year.)

Second Semester

Instructional Supervision—Dr. Patricia Johnson

Principalship and Practicum—Dr. Marium Williams

Interim Semester and Summer I

Law, Finance and Personnel - Dr. James Rinehart and Dr. Jane Lindle

Courses in Curriculum

Introduction to Educational Administration

In this course, Dr. Rinehart covered topics on theory and research on organizations. During the study of culture and climate of organizations, he and Dr. Burns had the students collect data on their own school climates and use technology to report this data by spreadsheets. During the study of leadership theory and the role of the principal, Dr. Rinehart used case studies to link theory to the practice of the principal. Concurrently, Dr. Williams visited these students on an evening when Dr. Burns was orienting his class. The students were urged to begin shadowing activities immediately to give them a reality view of work. Dr. Rinehart then proceeded to cover topics on motivation, change, conflict and the clinical supervision model. The clinical supervision component was taught during a one-day event in collaboration with Dr. Patsy Johnson.

Administration and Supervision of Instructional Programs

Dr. Johnson's course was designed around four modules. They were 1) Creating World Class Schools, 2) Curriculum Design, 3) Delivery of Instruction, and 4) Professional

Development for the Improvement of Instruction.

In this course, an ongoing group project was to create a school/district instructional plan. The school improvement plan was given attention throughout the course, but a one day event was scheduled in collaboration with Dr. Rinehart to simulate a school transformation plan mandated by the Kentucky Department of Education.

To enrich her curriculum component, Dr. Johnson planned a U.K. workshop day when students heard University of Kentucky faculty present on curriculum and assessment models. All the professors in this project were invited and most attended this session . To give the cohort a view of the resources at the University of Kentucky, the UK department of Administration and Supervision attended as well.

Dr. Johnson also assigned educational and supervisory platforms to encourage students to develop their personal vision of schools and instructional leadership. Dr. Johnson formally worked with students on writing a professional development plan. Writings of all sorts were revised and edited several times under her tutelage. These revisions reinforced the writing workshop day she and Dr. Rinehart had held in the fall.

Instructional Leader of the School and Practicum

In this course, Dr. Williams' objective was to give students opportunities to link research and theory about the principalship to the realities of the work of the principals. She focused on four modules derived from the Kentucky New Administrator Standards. They were 1) Insuring Effectiveness, 2) Developing Adults, 3) Developing Community, and 4) Insuring Equity.

Students were presented materials with research about roles, characteristics, and activities of successful principals that pertained to these modules. Students kept personal reflections on these theories. They were asked to link this research to the schools and principals they were working with and include them in their practicum journals.

The cohort was given performance tasks to assess their synthesis of readings and experiences. This task, their journals, shadowing reflections, community interviews and reading critiques gave students varied opportunities to connect their vision and knowledge of good schools to the real models they were experiencing. Extended curriculum components supporting by the collaborating professor enriched students opportunities to assess themselves and receive professional feedback.

The Leadership Early Assessment Program (LEAP) assessment, the portfolio day and the job interview simulation supported both classes presented this semester as well as reinforcing the work of the previous semester.

Assessment and Evaluation and Microcomputer Applications for Educational Leadership.

The courses were taught by Dr. Len Burns. He integrated much of his curriculum. When his students did a school climate survey, they were asked to report that data using spreadsheets and graphs to illustrate the information. In other assessments of curriculum, school climate, and culture, students were asked to use a variety of software applications to produce quality reports.

Students were also encouraged to use e-mail and Internet resources to enhance communication and research. This integration of computer applications with the work of the

students had a ripple effect in all their classes. The other professors could see computer enhanced products in assignments they received.

Dr. Burns was also the director of the LEAP assessment of these students so he and the other professors and students shared in this assessment experience.

School Finance, Law and Personnel

Drs. Rinehart and Lindle's team taught this course. In Kentucky, school principals are able to be certified at level I which does not include these three areas. The designers of this project decided that the project should give students an overview of these crucial areas. Therefore, a "safe to practice" focus was taken in designing and implementing this class.

The school law portion asked students to analyze significant cases. Students reviewed the articles from the largest Kentucky newspaper to provide an awareness of the immediacy of school problems.

The personnel component focused on the selection of personnel evaluation and training. Students experienced activities such as case studies; observation of tapes of classrooms; scripting of teachers; and preparation of training pamphlets, job applications and screening criteria.

In the finance course, students studied accounting problems and manuals on state guidelines and procedures.

This course was focused, as the others before it, on the realities of the work of the principal.

The Extended Curriculum

Perhaps a uniqueness of the Aspiring Principal Program was the opportunity provided for students to engage in extended curriculum experiences. In the original design of the program, the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative Board of Directors provided ten days of released time for each of the selected teachers. In alignment with this provision , the joint university faculty designed an extended curriculum that would enhance the social, political, technological, and professional development of the Aspiring Principal Program participants. The proposal to utilize the full allocation was presented and approved by the KVEC Board of Directors.

The Ten Days were designated by the joint university faculty as follows:

1. an active, engaged visit in their community;
2. the shadowing of an outstanding principal at the participants' certification level;
3. the shadowing of an outstanding principal at another certification level;
4. a visit to the legislature with a local legislative networking opportunity;
5. attendance at the Kentucky Educational Technology Conference;
6. participating in the National Association of Secondary School Principals Leadership Early Assessment Program;
7. attending a staff development workshop;
8. participating in a professional portfolio preparation workshop;
9. participating in a "mock" job-related interview with the presentation of a portfolio; and
10. participating in an event selected by the student.

More specifically, the objectives of the extended curriculum were to: (1) develop the social and personal relationships within the school community; (2) gain knowledge about the daily roles and responsibilities of school principals at various levels; (3) gain knowledge and skills in staff development; (4) gain insight about administrative skills and to develop a professional improvement plan; (5) expand individual vision of technology and application of technology within school settings; (6) organize a presentation of personal and professional attributes; (7) gain knowledge and experience in interviewing for a principalship; (8) gain knowledge and skills in working with state legislature in school related matters.

Special Features

One uniqueness of the curriculum was that it was suggested by the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative. Their suggestions included: administrative theory; group processing skills; school law; school finance; leadership; instruction; personnel; evaluation; and technology. Therefore, the extended curriculum was developed to extend and support the suggested curriculum. Although two of the events/experiences were anchored in EDIL 632, Instructional Leader of a School with Field Experience, the remaining eight were encouraged, voluntary experiences made available to the students. Student participation ranged from 65% in an optional event selected by the student to 100% in the two mandatory shadowing days and three additional experiences.

The Events

At the completion of the program, a study was conducted to learn: (1) how many students participated in each experience; (2) the degree of value of each experience as perceived by the students (prior to any experience as a principal); and (3) student reflections

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of the extended curriculum. To determine participation in each event, students were requested to indicate a "yes" or "no" concerning their participation in each of ten events; respond on a ten-point semantic differential scale with four variables (beneficial, learning, learning something new; and value); and to describe the experience in one or two sentences. To compare student response means to standards, the semantic differential scale was divided into four levels. Since students could select among a range of 1 - 10, the mid-score was determined to be 5.5 with 2.25 point intervals. Therefore, 1.00 - 3.25 (low), 3.26 - 5.50 (slight), 5.51 - 7.25 (moderate), and 7.26 - 10.00 (high) represented the standards for comparison. A summary of the research findings is provided in the following overview of each event/experience.

Community Visitation

The community visitation experience was collaboratively designed in EAD 807, Program Evaluation and Assessment. Students electing to spend a day in their community would visit local and city government offices, day care centers, hospitals, community support agencies, local businesses, and other appropriate community facilities. During their visit, they were to solicit a feeling of the people about the schools in the community; determine the mission and function of the agency, business, service, or office; and tell the people they talked with about the Aspiring Principals Program, and inform them about something exciting happening in their school. After the visit, they were to reflect on their visit in an attempt to determine, as a principal, how they could keep people informed about schools and how they might build partnerships with people they had talked with in the community. All (100%) of the students visited their communities. The specific mean scores on the

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semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 8.52; learned much, 8.52; learned new things, 8.10; and value, 8.62. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 7-10; learned much, 6-10; learned new things, 3-10; and value, 5-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.03; learned much, 1.12; learned new things, 1.89; and value, 1.16. Eighteen students wrote a reflection statement; seventeen were considered supportive statements. The other student wrote, "The people in the community were very uncomfortable in discussing matters related to the school system. It was an awkward experience for me." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Principal Shadowing

The two principal shadowing experiences were requirements of EDIL 632, Instructional Leader of a School with Field Experience. Although students officially enrolled in the course in the spring, 1996, the shadowing experience and other field experiences were introduced to the cohort group at the beginning of the program. Students were encouraged to plan and participate in field experiences throughout the program year. Concerning the principal shadowing experiences, students were encouraged to shadow an outstanding principal, outside their geographic area, at their certification level (early elementary, middle school, secondary school) and at a level above or below their level. Students also had the option to select another principal shadowing day at the other level.

Principal Shadowing at Certification Level

All (100%) of the students shadowed principals at their certification level. The

specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 9.14; learned much, 8.86; learned new things, 8.95; and value, 9.14. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 7-10; learned much, 5-10; learned new things, 6-10; and value, 7-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.12; learned much, 1.52; learned new things, 1.39; and value, 1.21. Twenty-one students wrote a reflection statement and all were considered supportive statements. Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Principal Shadowing at Another Level

All (100%) of the students shadowed principals at another certification level. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 8.68; learned much, 8.82; learned new things, 8.82; and value, 8.82. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 5-10; learned much, 7-10; learned new things, 6-10; and value, 4-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.59; learned much, 1.28; learned new things, 1.31; and value, 1.53. Sixteen students wrote a reflection statement and 15 were considered to be supportive statements. Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Legislative Visit and Follow-up Activity

The legislative visitation experience was designed in EAD 807, Program Evaluation and Assessment. Students electing to spend a day in developing an understanding of the legislative process were encouraged to: (1) select an appropriate day by calling the legislative information service voice mail; (2) select an issue that would be important to them as a principal and develop a position on the issue; (3) schedule appointments and discuss the issue with their legislators; (4) encourage their legislators to support their position; (5) visit the legislative bill office and gather information; and (6) visit both sessions of the legislature. Upon returning to their local community, follow-up activity included, (a) writing a letter of appreciation to their legislators, also encouraging them to support their position; (b) recruiting five people who supported their position and ask them to write to their legislators encouraging them to support the position; and (c) writing a reflection of their experience for their professional portfolio.

All (100%) of the students took advantage of participating in the legislative experience. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 8.14; learned much, 8.05; learned new things, 7.86; and value, 9.14. The ranges of responses were from as follows: beneficial, 3-10; learned much, 3-10; learned new things, 2-10; and value, 7-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.98; learned much, 2.05; learned new things, 2.24; and value, 2.52. Eighteen students wrote a reflection statement; 14 were considered supportive statements. One student wrote, "I liked going to the legislature but was uncomfortable speaking with my representative over issues in education." Another student wrote, "This experience was not as worthwhile as the others. It probably should have been planned better on my part." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Attending the Technology Conference

The technology conference event was discussed in EAD 824, Microcomputers in Educational Leadership, but was planned by each student. Since EAD 824 was conducted in the fall, 1995, and the conference was held in February, 1996, no accountability was required.

All (100%) of the students attended the conference. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 8.64; learned much, 8.82; learned new things, 8.82; and value, 8.73. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 5-10; learned much, 6-10; learned new things, 5-10; and value, 4-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.56; learned much, 1.33; learned new things, 1.59; and value, 1.72. Nineteen

students wrote a reflection statement and 16 were considered supportive statements. One student wrote, "It was difficult to get in the sessions—too much of a focus on selling products." Another wrote, "I was able to obtain extra training during my days at the technology conference. I also was able to see new applications of technology and make connections to classroom applications." Another student made a connection to EAD 824 when s/he wrote, "This built upon my experience from class." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Participation in the Leadership Early Assessment Program

Through the human and financial support of the Kentucky Department of Education, the Aspiring Principals Program cohort students had one of the first opportunities in Kentucky to participate in the National Association of Secondary School Principals' recently developed Leadership Early Assessment Program (LEAP). Beginning in late March, 1996, and concluding in early May, 1996, the 22 students plus an additional two volunteers participated in the program. Four assessment centers were conducted for 24 participants at Hazard Community College Gorman Center in Hazard, Kentucky. Following each assessment center, written reports were prepared. They were then shared with the participant by each participant's assessor. Participants also received professional development suggestions and a guide to develop a futuristic growth plan from their assessor. Although the four centers had been completed at the time of this survey, several participants were awaiting their reports and feedback from their assessors. An attempt was made to connect the writing of a professional development plan with the objectives of EAD 807,

Program Evaluation and Assessment, offered during intersession, 1996, but was aborted due to the lengthy time it took to complete the finalizing assessment reports and completing assessor feedback sessions.

All (100%) of the students participated in the LEAP experience. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 9.52; learned much, 9.38; learned new things, 9.24; and value, 9.48. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 7-10; learned much, 7-10; learned new things, 7-10; and value, 8-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, .87; learned much, .86; learned new things, 1.04; and value, .68. Twenty-one students wrote a reflection statement and 20 were considered supportive statements. One student wrote, "This was probably one of the best experiences provided through the program. It helped me see my strengths more clearly and evaluate my weaknesses as an administrator." Students also said, "Intense experience!" and "A hard day. I have not received feedback so I don't feel I should answer." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Attending a Staff Development Workshop

The staff development workshop was planned in EDA 600, Organization and Administration of American Education, during the fall, 1995, with EDA 633, Supervision of Instruction, offered in the spring, 1996. Students met on the campus of the University of Kentucky to explore the theories and research related to adult learning and the importance of staff development. Cohort staff and guest speakers delivered the program.

Eighteen (82%) of the students attended the workshop. The specific mean scores on

the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 9.28; learned much, 9.17; learned new things, 9.39; and value, 9.17. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 8-10; learned much, 7-10; learned new things, 7-10; and value, 8-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, .88; learned much, 1.02; learned new things, .91; and value, .90. Sixteen students wrote a reflection statement and 15 were considered supportive statements. One student wrote, "I felt valued as a member of the Aspiring Principals cohort. It was a very beneficial day in hearing the guest speakers and in helping me realize the importance of the program and how it relates to the vision of those committed to the program" Another student wrote, "This activity provided insightful information on current trends concerning adult learning." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Participating in a Portfolio Development Workshop

Early in the program, fall, 1995, students were required to begin to assemble documentation of their preparation program in alignment with new Kentucky Administrative Standards and Indicators. Therefore, throughout the academic year they had been collecting information and artifacts in a "working" portfolio. The purpose of the workshop was to assist students in understanding the purposes of a "professional" portfolio and how to value and select items for it. The workshop also focused upon how to organize the portfolio for presentation to a job interview committee.

All (100%) of the students attended the workshop. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 8.23; learned much, 8.27; learned new things, 8.26; and value, 8.27. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 3-10; learned much, 3-10;

learned new things, 3-10; and value, 3-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 2.05; learned much, 2.16; learned new things, 2.12; and value, 2.35. Twenty-one students wrote a reflection statement and 13 were considered supportive statements. One student wrote, "Good input as how to organize and improve my portfolio." Another wrote, "The day should be in the beginning of the year." Another student said, "The development day needs to be centered around the development of the portfolio. More hands on time." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Participating in a "Mock" Job-related Interview (with the presentation of a portfolio)

In conjunction with the portfolio preparation workshop, students had one week to organize their professional portfolio and prepare for a simulated job-related interview for a principalship at their certification level. During the portfolio preparation workshop, students were given a job announcement with specific position qualifications. The assignment was to write a letter of application, describing their qualifications in alignment with those in the announcement. Students were also to present a resume aligned to the job qualifications (students had prepared a preliminary resume in EAD 824, Microcomputers in Educational Leadership). Students were to include the application letter and resume in their portfolios for presentation to the committee during the interview. As a method of introducing themselves to the interview committee, students were given approximately 15 minutes to present their portfolio. An additional 30 minutes were devoted to responding to structured interview questions. Students were then excused from the interview while committees prepared feedback suggestions and comments. After the feedback preparation period, students

returned for 15 minutes of feedback and dialogue.

Twenty (91%) of the students attended the workshop. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 9.30; learned much, 9.00; learned new things, 8.95; and value, 9.20. The ranges of responses were: beneficial, 6-10; learned much, 5-10; learned new things, 5-10; and value, 6-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.07; learned much, 1.43; learned new things, 1.50; and value, 1.12. Seventeen students wrote a reflection statement and 15 were considered to be supportive statements. One student wrote, "The interview helped me assess the total quality of my responses. Feedback was excellent and I felt that my interview team was genuinely interested in helping me communicate effectively in an interview setting." Another student said, "Another intense day." Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Participating in an Event Selected by the Student

Students were given one day of released time to select and participate in an experience or event of their choice. Students elected to visit the central administration, attend an additional day at the technology conference, spend a day working on a computer software application program, and shadow another principal.

Thirteen (65%) of the students used the optional day. The specific mean scores on the semantic differential scale were: beneficial, 9.36; learned much, 9.27; learned new things, 9.27; and value, 9.45. The ranges of responses were from as follows: beneficial, 7-10; learned much, 7-10; learned new things, 7-10; and value, 7-10. The standard deviation for each variable was: beneficial, 1.03; learned much, 1.12; learned new things, 1.89; and

value, 1.16. Eight (8) students wrote a reflection statement and all were considered to be supportive statements. One student wrote concerning his/her visit to the central administration office, "Helped me further understand the big picture." Another student stated that she worked with another student to develop skills on the Excel spreadsheet. Therefore, based upon a preliminary review of the data and statistics available, it was concluded that the event was highly successful.

Summary

The combination of all events/experiences implemented, revealed the following data on the semantic differential scale:

1. the overall mean ranges were: beneficial, 8.14 - 9.52; learned much, 8.05 - 9.38; learned new things, 7.86 - 9.39; and high value, 8.27 - 9.48.
2. the overall range of responses were: beneficial, 2-10; learned much, 2-10; learned new things, 2-10; and high value, 3-10.
3. the overall standard deviation ranges were: beneficial, 2.15 - .87; learned much, 2.15 - .86; learned new things, 2.23 - .91; and high value, 2.35 - .67.
4. the percentage of responses above "6" on the semantic differential scale was: beneficial, 97%; learned much, 96%; learned new things, 95%; and high value, 97%.
5. the summarization of all mean scores on the four variables for each of the ten events/ experiences were considered successful in the following rank order.

Mean of Means	Event/Experience
9.41	Participating in the Leadership Early Assessment Program
9.34	Participating in an Event Selected by the Student
9.25	Attending a Staff Development Workshop
9.11	Participating in a "Mock" Job-related interview (with the presentation of a portfolio)
9.02	Principal Shadowing at Certification Level
8.79	Principal Shadowing at Another Certification Level
8.75	Attending the Kentucky Technology Conference
8.44	Visiting the Community
8.30	Visiting the Legislature with a Follow-up Activity
8.26	Participating in a Portfolio Development Workshop

Given the data, it was concluded that the extended curriculum was "very beneficial" and of high value." It was also concluded that students "learned much" and "learned many new things." It was recommended that faculty work closer with students to improve their planning skills and to anchor each experience/event to a course for greater accountability.

The Professors' Perspectives

In a debriefing interview of the five professors, eight questions were asked. This interview was done by phone by one of the collaborators. The interviews were informal and private. These conversations allowed for reflection on practice that the professors had encouraged in their classes and seemed a fitting activity to conclude the project. The first question asked them to reflect on the strength of the curriculum of this project. Four of

them mentioned that teaming and collaborating with other professors was a strength. Their rationale for this strength was that the variety of activities and perspectives made the experience richer for students. In the words of these professors, "We were able to tie things together"" this made the experience more cutting edge."

All five of the professors mentioned the numerous experiences that were available to these students and how well they fit the realities of the practitioners' work. As ancillaries of these experiences, the disposition of students to confront the realities of the principalship were mentioned. "There should be no shock about the routines of principals." "These students were able to overcome their shyness after interviewing major stakeholders in their community and in the state legislature."

The second question asked "What changes or accommodations in your class did you make to fit this project's needs?" This question stimulated a variety of responses. These responses, however, were in accord. Much flexibility was used by each of the instructors. Times, places, testing practices, course structures were all changed and/or rearranged to fit the needs of this project.

For the third question, "What would you do differently with your class if this project were repeated?" answers reflected a concern about time. Time was a constraint that impacted all. Four instructors indicated that too much content was concentrated into too little time. And three of the five instructors felt time impacted adversely assessment issues such as not enough protected practice, not enough time for instructor feedback, and not enough monitoring to ensure student accountability. A fourth professor echoed this concern for accountability when she worried "perhaps we negotiated too much" in trying to make

accommodations for students.

Question four asked "Were there any surprises in implementing this class?" This question gave the most scattered results. One was surprised at the lack of technology skill of some of the students. One, who had never worked with a cohort group, commented on the cohort's cohesiveness. One mentioned the fact that university faculties could mesh so well. One responded that her location and time had to be changed. One expected a different kind of experience because of its experimental design and so was "not surprised."

The hardships mentioned in question five were all weather related. This was not an unusual response because this was a fall and spring and summer project that required the instructors and some students to drive two hours or more. Snow, blizzards, rainstorms and tornados were mentioned. These hardships demonstrated the professional commitment of the professors and their students to complete this project successfully.

The sixth question asked "How would you describe the quality of students work?" The answers to this question were similar. Four of the answers indicated that there was a range of performance across the group. Some students worked well from the start and many improved. One professor also noted a decline in quality of work as students became stressed and tired. All five professors saw worth in some aspect of their students' performances.

The seventh question asked these instructors to predict their students' future success as principals. Again, their responses were almost in unison. "Better than most—perhaps some will be outstanding." Again, these professors saw leadership qualities in many of their students.

The eighth question was "Are you planning any further projects with any of the

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university team." There was a mix of answers here but the essence of further collaborations were in all of the answers. Presenting this project in a national and regional Council of Professors of Educational Administration meetings was mentioned by all. Preparing a paper for possible publication on this project was mentioned. Continued work on joint doctoral committees and continuing exchange of plans for new masters programs will also insure further collaboration. These professors of educational administration have in the past been loosely associated. However, their connection to this aspiring principals project will ensure closer ties in the future and more plans for collaboration.

The Next Step

A recent KDE new certification meeting of all the universities gave these and other university professors an opportunity to plan a restructured model of developing school leaders. The conversations centered around curriculum, portfolios and a professional level of certification. The experience of the professors of Aspiring Principals program described here enriched these plans. The use of a state mandated portfolio to document standard competencies as well as new tests based on simulations and case studies validated the direction of the work done in this cohort program. The collaborators have produced a model that will probably not be exactly duplicated at any one of the universities . However the focus on experiences and activities that link theory and research to the work of the practitioners will be more "do -able". Kentucky professors, from this model of restructured leadership classrooms, have been there and done that. Now they can refine again-----It continues!

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